



STAT

The director of our plant is a Soviet named Barchuk, who speaks little Polish. In 1948, he came from the USSR, where, it seems, he had been a captain in the NKVD. His two assistants, Shevchuk and Kosov, are also Soviet. The planning bureau is headed by a Soviet engineer named Bychuk, who speaks almost no Polish. His salary of 15,000 zlotys a month is supplemented with bonuses, which increase his earnings to almost 20,000 zlotys a month. He has a house in town and another in the country, and two automobiles. Each of the two assistant directors earns 8,000 zlotys a month in addition to bonuses which bring the total up to about 12,000 zlotys. In addition, a sum equal to the pay of the director of a Soviet factory is credited to each in a special bank account in the USSR.

As a mechanic, I received 30 zlotys a day, or 700 to 800 zlotys a month. An unskilled worker does not receive more than 500 to 600 zlotys monthly.

The 8-hour day disappeared long ago. The workday often lasts 11 or 12 hours, including compulsory overtime for political purposes having nothing to do with the workers. Party members are obliged to work longer hours than nonparty members.

Supposedly, there are prizes for exceeding the production quotas. But the prizes are given only to party members, most of whom never exceed any quota. They are activists employed by the management to "stimulate the enthusiasm" of the workers and "encourage their interest in socialist competition." If the activists' wives work, the couple earns several thousand zlotys a month. An ordinary worker is compelled to participate in "contests" and to perform many "additional voluntary tasks." The factory's enterprise committee calls a meeting of the workers and announces that the X or Y factory in the same branch of industry produces more than the Cegielski plant. At the same time, the workers at X or Y factory are told that the Cegielski plant is outproducing their respective plants. Several activists then insist that the production quotas must be raised. Other workers become angry but can say nothing. They know that, if they protest, they will be punished and sent to a forced-labor camp. Thus, the new quotas are "unanimously approved." The first time a worker arrives at the plant 15 minutes late, he is reprimanded severely. The second time, he is punished by being transferred to a harder or poorer-paying job, or sent to a labor camp.

The enterprise committee is supposed to represent the workers and to defend their rights. Elections to this committee are supposed to take place every June. However, the factory planning committee nominates the candidates in advance. As a matter of form, an employee asks the workers for their nominations, but these names never appear on the list of candidates.

The Cegielski plant employs more than 1,000 women. There is a nursery at the plant for their children, but the women hesitate to entrust their children to the care of the attendants. In January 1953, two children fell from their beds and died soon afterward. Their mothers received 300 zlotys as compensation. The women are also displeased because the food is poor and because crosses and images of saints have been removed from the rooms.

The Polish workers do not even have recourse to the weapon of all free workers, the strike. I know of several cases similar to that of the farm workers of Swierkowa, near Poznan, who stopped work because they had received no salary for 4 months. The farm director called the UB (Urząd Bezpieczeństwa, Security Police), which arrested 15 workers and sent them to an unknown destination.

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